



2014 GOS Grant Report
Hemlock Treatment in the Songbird Management Area
Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, Conasauga Ranger District
3 November 2015

In 2013, the Forest Service applied for a Bill Terrell Conservation Grant from GOS for several habitat improvement projects within the Songbird Management Area on Grassy Mountain in Murray County, Georgia. The GOS funded the Forest Service \$500.00 to help purchase the insecticide needed to chemically treat eastern hemlock trees (*Tsuga canadensis*) affected with hemlock wooly adelgid in the Songbird Area. The mature hemlock stands are important habitat for the diverse avian community. The objective of the treatment was to prevent the nearly certain mortality of a portion of the hemlock trees present there. The target number of trees to be treated was 200.

The Conasauga Ranger District created a new Hemlock Conservation Area (HCA) in the Songbird Trail vicinity. In May and June of 2014, Forest Service personnel treated a total of 109 hemlock trees with a combination of Coretect brand imidicloprid tablets purchased by the GOS and soil injections of Zenith brand imidicloprid in water. Of these trees, 55 of them were 19 inches dbh (diameter at breast height) or larger, many were larger than 30 inches dbh. Each tree was tagged with an aluminum numbered tag for future effectiveness monitoring.

In May 2015, an additional 90 trees were treated in the Songbird Area HCA with imidicloprid for a total of 199 hemlocks treated.



This treatment method has been found to be extremely effective in keeping hemlocks alive and resistant to hemlock wooly adelgid infestation for several years. When monitored for treatment effectiveness, treated hemlocks in HCAs on the Chattahoochee National Forest are green and healthy, with little or no adelgid “wool”. This is in stark contrast to the areas surrounding the HCAs, where all the hemlocks are dying or dead. Although the Songbird Area HCA will not be “officially” monitored regarding the effectiveness of the treatment and its need for retreatment until 2017 or 2018, personnel visiting the area report that the tagged trees are green and healthy.

In addition, six bluebird-size bird houses were donated to the Forest Service by the GOS. These structures will provide supplemental cavity nesting habitat in the Songbird Area.

